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As it stands, however, the book is a useful handbook for students. It is only to be hoped that due care will be taken by its readers to analyze the data and consider all possible explanations, before they too hastily join Dr. Woods in condemning the work of those who still act on the assumption that war may be amenable to rational control.

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Le Prêsident de la Rêpublique: son rôle, ses droits, ses devoirs. By HENRY LEYRET. Paris, Librairie Armand Colin. 1913.—xvi, 282 pp.

The portentous decline of legislative bodies and the corresponding growth in the vigor of executive action are not, of course, peculiar to the United States. In Great Britain and Canada the cabinet has come to dominate Parliament. In France, although the center of gravity has by no means shifted to the cabinet, political literature shows an unmistakable tendency in that direction. Experience has demonstrated the need of a stronger executive; French writers and French statesmen are pretty well agreed on that point. A definite movement to consolidate the groups, as seen in the formation of Briand's Federation of the Left and in the growing sentiment for proportional representation, is expected to give greater stability to the cabinet.

But some thinkers of conservative mold, disappointed with the weakness of the cabinet and hopeless of liberating it from the influence of political intrigue, look rather to the expansion of presidential authority. M. Leyret is one of these. It is interesting to observe that his volume appeared just before the presidential election of 1913 in which the National Assembly fixed its choice upon a man whose character and political views were certain to inform the office with a new spirit. President Poincaré has not disappointed expectations. From the first—and in spite of protests from the Radical-Socialist party—he assumed the active rôle which Leyret had advocated.

Now M. Leyret, who does not love parliaments and politicians, believes that the president should be something more than a master of ceremonies. The system of 1875, he maintains, did not contemplate a passive rôle. If a "mischievous tradition" of passivity has developed, the reason is that colorless men have been elevated to office, that nowadays politicians expect to become president "as a civil servant becomes bureau chief—by virtue of seniority." As a matter of fact "the country would like to have a president elected because of merit and ascendancy. . . . If he should exercise his prerogatives with

wisdom and courage, France would be grateful. . . . This does not mean that he should either engage in a systematic struggle with Parliament or play an ambitious part; it means that, before the eyes of attentive France, he should restore influence and credit to the functions" of the office.

In developing his thesis the author resorts to a peculiar and perhaps deliberate misreading of the constitution. The constitution says nothing about separation of powers; in fact the ministers are expressly made responsible to the chambers. Yet M. Leyret's argument is based upon the existence of the separation of powers. Its existence is established by a remarkable effort of logic: Montesquieu and the Declaration of 1789 prove that "the separation of powers is the inevitable rule of every parliamentary government. . . . The present form of government, being essentially parliamentary, has as its basis the separation of powers. The separation would be chimerical if one began by establishing in principle the subordination of the executive to the legislature." Hence the executive is not subordinate to the legislature.

Something of the same looseness of argument occurs where an attempt is made to establish the independence of the president in exercising particular functions. Thus: "the history of the last thirty years" demonstrates that the president "possesses complete liberty in the choice of ministers." In the text the history of the last thirty years is represented by two incidents (1880 and 1902) which are declared to be "decisive"; and this in spite of the fact that a new premier is chosen every eight months. Abundant evidence is available to refute the statement. While circumstances may occasionally allow the president an alternative choice, he usually can exercise little more discretion than the king of England. He may, it is true, invite any one of several members of the majority to form a cabinet; but final decision does not rest in his hands. President Poincaré, in June, 1913, sent for six different leaders in succession before the Viviani cabinet was formed. Further, M. Leyret asserts that the president should not allow the various portfolios to fall into weak or unqualified hands. "He has the right to exact that his confidence shall not be abused by the formation of a ministry which would only be a collection of politicians charged with doing the business of the parliamentary groups." The right to exact? "Suggest" would be a more appropriate word; for the president lacks the means of enforcing his views upon an unsympathetic minister. It is the Chamber which dictates.

The book can hardly be called convincing, even though in some ways it is deftly executed. It is deft especially in so combining and

confusing law and practice and theory and aspiration that few men, having read the book, could be quite sure what it had maintained and what it had proved. It is like "Sordello": the first and the last lines are clear enough, but the intervening argument is somewhat obscure.

E. M. Sait.

Les Partis Politiques sous la III^e^ République. By Leon Jacques. Paris, Larose et Tenin, 1913.—xvi, 541 pp.

To American students no aspect of French government is so baffling as the party system. The further its intricacies are explored, the more insoluble they are likely to appear. It is a relief to learn from Dr. Jacques, therefore, that the Frenchman himself is sometimes nonplussed by the phenomena which confront him. For instance: "It is very difficult to tell what the exact and precise results of the elections of 1910 were; we should encounter still more formidable obstacles if we tried to discover those of earlier general elections." Dr. Jacques has very properly emphasized this element of indefiniteness, for any attempt to fit French parties into a rigid and logical scheme would obscure some of their essential characteristics.

Dr. Jacques has by no means provided a complete survey of partisan activity under the Republic. He has nothing to say about campaigns and elections, nothing about parliamentary tactics, and very little about history. The history of parties is carried to 1876 and there abandoned with the apology that several volumes would be required for its completion. This is a regrettable omission; and the validity of the excuse is perhaps open to question in view of the fact that so much space is allotted to a theoretical disquisition on the origin of parties and to an examination of the English "caucus" and the Jacobin Society. The theories, though interesting, are hardly conclusive. Dr. Jacques cites Boutmy, Pasteur, and Delpech in justification of the two-party system; he quotes President Poincaré's plea for a third party, "very large, but still homogeneous," which should seek to harmonize "these two correlative notions" of conservatism and socialism; and, expressing an opinion of his own favorable to the existence of four parties, he has to admit that French practice fails to accommodate itself to the ideal.

The greater part of the volume, however, has to do with things that are altogether concrete. It is devoted to an analysis of existing parties from the standpoint of principles and organization. Hitherto, except in the case of the Socialist party, this field has been neglected. Dr. Jacques has broken new ground. Fortunately he has not contented